



News Release

Port-Orford-cedar Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Team
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EIS to Examine Port-Orford-Cedar Management

Federal agencies are beginning an examination of the long-term effects of their actions to slow the spread of a disease fatal to Port-Orford-cedar. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service are asking the public to help define what issues should be addressed and what questions should be answered in a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) to be prepared over the next several months affecting BLM Districts in southwestern Oregon and the Siskiyou National Forest. The planning team is asking for written ideas and suggestions by March 12, 2003. Interested parties will be asked to participate again this summer by reviewing the draft document when it is released for a 90-day public comment period. Details about the project are available at: http://www.or.blm.gov/planning/Port-Orford-cedar_SEIS.

Port-Orford-cedar grows in southwestern Oregon and northwestern California. For the last 50 years, a disease which attacks the roots of the trees has been affecting the population, especially near roads and water courses. Once a tree is infected, the disease is almost always fatal. The disease is spread by spores that travel in water or mud. Natural forces such as runoff, erosion and animal movement can spread the spores. Human activity can accelerate the spread as vehicles, foot traffic, and heavy equipment pick up mud from an infested area and deposit it in uninfested areas.

The agencies currently use a variety of management actions to limit the spread of the disease. These actions have included prevention techniques such as educating public land users about the disease and what can be done to slow its spread. On-the-ground management actions include: seasonally closing roads in infested areas to prevent adjacent stands from becoming infested; removing Port-Orford-cedar trees along roadways; planting Port-Orford-cedar on low-risk sites; eradicating the host around newly infested areas; and washing vehicles and equipment leaving or entering infested areas. These actions are being monitored and their effectiveness evaluated. Trees with a natural resistance to the disease have been identified and a breeding program to develop resistant planting stock is under way.

“This supplemental environmental impact statement will be used to develop alternatives for maintaining Port-Orford-cedar on federal forests,” said Ken Denton, Acting SEIS Team Leader. “We’re trying to identify the strategy that best maintains the cedar without unnecessarily impacting other forest uses.”

After the public scoping period, the planning team will assess the comments and develop alternatives to be addressed in the analysis. A Draft SEIS should be available for a 90-day public review period beginning in June 2003.

Written suggestions and questions should be addressed to: Port-Orford-cedar SEIS Team, P.O.Box 2965, Portland, Oregon 97208. E-mail: ORPOCEIS@or.blm.gov.

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